

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed July 12, 2005. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's consideration of the Application. Claims 17, 42, and 50 have been canceled, and Claims 1, 6, 13-14, 16, 19, 22, 24-27, 38, 41, 43-44, 47-49, 51-65 have been amended to clarify, more particularly point out, and more distinctly claim inventive concepts previously present in these claims. Certain amendments do not narrow the scope of the claims, and certain amendments are not required for patentability. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added by the amendments to the claims. In order to advance prosecution of this Application, Applicants have responded to each notation by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Claim Objections

Applicants thank the Examiner for pointing out the informalities of Claims 42 and 55-65. Claims 42 and 55-65 have been amended to correct the informalities. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request removal of the objections to Claims 42 and 55-65.

Section 112 Rejection

Claims 14, 16-17, 19-40 and 55-60 are amended in accordance with the requirement of the Examiner to correct informalities. Applicants thank the Examiner for pointing out the informalities. The claims particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter the Applicants regard as the invention, and thus are allowable under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request removal of the rejection of Claims 14, 19, 22, and 55-60, and allowance of Claims 56 and 60.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's allowance of Claim 63-65.

The Examiner indicated that Claims 17, 38, 49-50, and 53 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. (Office Action, page 19.) Claims 38 and 53 have been amended in independent form including all

the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claims 38 and 53.

Moreover, independent Claims 1, 13, 14, 55, 57-59, 61, and 62 have been amended to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 17, and independent Claim 41 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 50. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of independent Claims 1, 13, 14, 41, 55, 57-59, 61, and 62.

Section 103(a) Rejection

The Examiner rejects under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a): Claims 1-5, 10, 12-14, 16, 22-23, 28-29, and 31 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,546,391 to Hochschild et al. (“*Hochschild*”) in light of U.S. Patent No. 6,144,668 to Bass et al. (“*Bass*”) and U.S. Patent No. 5,790,545 to Holt et al. (“*Holt*”); Claims 6-9, 24-25, 32-37, and 39 as being unpatentable over *Hochschild* and *Bass* in light of U.S. Patent No. 6,542,502 to Herring et al. (“*Herring*”); Claims 11 and 30 as being unpatentable over *Hochschild* and *Bass* in light of U.S. Patent No. 5,832,222 to Dziadosz et al. (“*Dziadosz*”); Claims 19-21 and 26-27 as being unpatentable over *Hochschild* and *Bass* in light of U.S. Patent No. 6,091,707 to Egbert et al. (“*Egbert*”); Claim 40 as being unpatentable over *Hochschild* and *Bass* in light of U.S. Patent No. 6,421,769 to Teitenberg et al. (“*Teitenberg*”); Claim 55 as being unpatentable over *Hochschild* in light of *Holt*; Claims 57-59 as being unpatentable over *Hochschild* in light of *Egbert*; Claims 41-44, 47-48, 51-52, 54, and 61 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,094,434 to Kotzur et al. (“*Kotzur*”) in light of *Holt*; and Claim 62 as being unpatentable over *Kotzur* in light of *Egbert*. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons discussed below.

As discussed above, independent Claims 1, 13, 14, 41, 55, 57-59, 61, and 62, as amended, are allowable. The claims that depend from independent Claims 1, 13, 14, 41, 55, 57-59, 61, and 62 are allowable based on their dependence on the independent claims and further because they recite numerous additional patentable distinctions over the references of the rejection. Because Applicants believe they have amply demonstrated the allowability of the independent claims over the references of the rejection, and to avoid burdening the record, Applicants have not provided detailed remarks concerning these dependent claims. Applicants, however, remain ready to provide such remarks if it becomes appropriate to do so.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of independent Claims 1, 13, 14, 41, 55, 57-59, 61, and 62 and all claims that depend on these claims.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully request full allowance of all the pending claims.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance prosecution of this case in any way, the Examiner is invited to contact Keiko Ichiye, the Attorney for Applicants, at the Examiner's convenience at (214) 953-6494.

Although Applicants believe no fees are due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of Baker Botts L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

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